SYDNEY ANARCHO-COMMUNISTS

OCTOBER 2020
BULLETIN #2

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge that the land that we have been meeting on, organising on, and living on is stolen land. It belongs to the traditional custodians who never ceded their sovereignty to the colonial forces of Britain who, with brutal force and malicious cunning, invaded over 200 years ago. First Nations people have been engaged in a war of resistance ever since, and settlers must acknowledge their complicity in the structures of hierarchy which have facilitated their domination, and strive to be genuine allies in this de-colonial resistance. Colonialism is the product of the illegitimate hegemony of capitalism as facilitated by the state, whose falsified national borders justify the racism and oppression which continues to affect Indigenous people, refugees, and ethnic minorities globally today. This is why de-colonial struggle does not exist in isolation; it is at the heart of our resistance to capitalism, the state, and interacts with all illegitimate hierarchies which foster oppression and exploitation in these names.

We acknowledge the sovereignty of the Dharug, the Kuring-Gai, the Dharawal, the Comma, the Cammeraigal, the Borogegal, the Garigal, the Cadigal, the Wangal, the Wllumattagal, the Bidjigal, the Boorooberongal, the Cabrogal, and the Gweagal people, and any other nations on whose land we reside in the so-called Sydney region. We pay our respects to elders past, present, and emerging on each of these lands. We acknowledge that the ally-ship of settlers in our spaces will more often than not be inadequate and require a constant state of re-learning, however, we hope that that we can put into practice the principles of de-colonisation to the best of our ability, and remain committed to the enactment of these principles.

INDEX

4
WHAT CAN ANARCHISTS DO TO ORGANISE WITHIN UNIONS IN AUSTRALIA?
Toby Violet Walmsley

10
ON THE AUTHORITARIAN PERSONALITY
Daniel al-Rachid

14
ON SOCIAL REPRODUCTION: INVISIBLE LABOUR AND THE VIOLENT ORIGINS OF THE NUCLEAR FAMILY
Anonymous

19
TOWARDS A RADICAL ECOLOGY: AN ANARCHIST RESPONSE TO THE CLIMATE CRISIS
T H Livingstone and James Sherriff

24
IMAGINING A DEMOCRATIC PRESS: HOW ANARCHISM CAN RELEASE JOURNALISM FROM THE CAPITALIST CHOKEHOLD
Honey Christensen and Robbie Mason

29
READING FARJ'S SOCIAL ANARCHISM AND ORGANISATION: A SHORT REVIEW ON ESPECIFISMO
Charlotte Murphy

33
FURTHER READINGS

SPECIAL THANKS
Cover Design - Bill Chunks
Artwork - Stella MB

In order for anarchists to win the majority of working people over to the ideas of anarchism, it is sensible that they organise and propagandise in the most viable mass political organisations of the class: unions. This is not only because unions provide an immediate platform to conduct these arguments. Unions also provide the most fertile ground to apply anarchist principles in practice and build tangible working class power against the bosses and the state. The workplace is the theatre where the workers themselves produce value for society and for capitalists and therefore have a high degree of power to influence economic and social forces. If engaged with effectively, unions have the unique capacity to be prepared in methods of organisation and production for a socialist society tomorrow, and as the German anarchist Rudolf Rocker described as the 'practical school of socialism' today.

Although in abstract this principle may be sensible, in strategic terms engaging with the union movement within the contemporary Australian context presents significant political challenges. These challenges are not only a result of the political position of unions today, but also the lack of coherent anarchist organisation of any form within unions themselves. This limits what I argue should be the goal of anarchist organising within unions: the maximisation of worker autonomy, self-management, and political consciousness. The goal of this article is to outline some of the challenges of organising as an anarchist within Australian unions, and to provide a basic survey for how organised anarchists can overcome them.

CHALLENGES WITH AUSTRALIAN UNIONS

I have already provided a more thorough analysis of the current political situation with regards to unions in the previous Sydney Anarcho-Communists bulletin. Obviously, I do not wish to repeat that argument word for word, or provide a comprehensive or complete analysis of the challenges of engaging with Australian unions as an anarchist. What this section will provide is a brief overview of the challenges touched on in the previous article, with a few additions, and provide the base analysis of the kinds of forces an anarchist is up against when organising within unions.

Just because unions provide fertile terrain to engage with the working class does not mean they encourage worker democracy or autonomy, and therefore support of unions should not be uncritical. Unions, especially in contemporary Australia, are essentially reformist organisations. They earn this title by virtue of their contradictory position: they are both against the interests of the state and capital, insofar as they are accountable to and constituted by their

members, but they also have an interest in maintaining capital and the state, in order to protect the interest of an inevitable layer of union bureaucracy. This is no better demonstrated than when the union bureaucracy sold out workers' power in the 1970s accord between the unions and the government.

What this reformism means is that the political disputes unions engage with are limited from a revolutionary perspective, and will always eventually have to be challenged by the membership against the bureaucracy, whose position can only be sustained with low participation from the members.

Practically, this means slogans employed by the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) like "Join your union" effectively lend support solely to the union bureaucracy. This type of sloganeering also gives free reign to the service model of unionism. The service model frames unions as providing specific services, such as industrial advice and other personal benefits, rather than engaging workers in any sort of struggle with their employers or political opponents. Although this model of unionism is embraced wholeheartedly by pro-boss unions like the Shopkeepers and Distributors Association (SDA), many unions that supposedly engage in serious worker-centred unionism nonetheless actively promote union membership to workers through the use of shopping discounts (Union Shopper), work-journey insurance, and the 'safety net' of individual industrial advice. This model of unionism has a pacifying effect on the union membership, who are sold a vision of unionism that has more in common with an insurance company than a political organisation. This both positions the union to be too weak to oppose the boss even if it wanted to and provides incentives for the union to sell rank-and-file power and shut down radical agitation and organising in exchange for the right to easily sign up passive members. What this indicates is that when organising within a workplace you are likely to encounter resistance not only from the boss (who has a clear and direct reason to prevent you from overthrowing them!), but also - in the long term - from the union bureaucracy.

THE LIMITS OF INDIVIDUAL ANARCHISTS

Revolutionaries then have a broad range of forces stacked against them if they intend to use unions for revolutionary purposes. What, then, is the utility of engaging with unions as an individual anarchist? As I will discuss in this section, based on the goals and means anarchists have, the answer is ultimately very little. This point does not aim to discourage action, but to emphasise that engaging in union activity as an individual is not sustainable nor strategic in the long term, and that significant energy must be expended into growing the more specific yet more politically conscious core with which you engage in these struggles. This section will analyse the limitations of engaging as an individual anarchist a bit further, providing the background for how organised anarchism is capable of overcoming them. To understand the limitations of individual action, I will quickly foray into the general means anarchists have avail-

able to influence unions.

Most union members are not a part of unions to achieve specific political goals, but rather for their own self-defence as workers. This is not some deficit on behalf of workers, for if they're engaged in the union in a democratic way and organise with their colleagues, they are in many ways embodying the solidarity that should form the basis of social organisation in a better world. What this does mean, however, is that often recruiting on a specifically political basis without a connection to concrete struggle is a dead end, as the ideal you are arguing for is disconnected from the immediate interests and needs of the workplace.

The analysis of late 19th and early 20th Century Italian Anarchist Errico Malatesta is pertinent to this point. In his 1922 essay "Interests and Ideals", Malatesta makes the case that, in the context of working within labour unions, although "[personal] interest is conservative, and [anarchist] ideal revolutionary", the role of an anarchist is to on one hand agitate for the ideal whilst on the other seriously engage with practical and concrete disputes that arise out of particular interests. He writes that anarchists should:

...be the first to take up battle stations… even when it relates to minor battles… They must inspire the workers to ever more ambitious demands and avoid that contemplative, ecstatic, and absolutist state of mind that ultimately leads to inertia and passive waiting for some future paradise… But, in grappling with the battles of today, the anarchists should never lose sight of the future; they must fight the tendency towards accommodation, which is typical of the masses, and those methods of struggle that signify acceptance of the status quo.

This characterisation provides a scaffold for anarchist engagement within unions where not only the goal of anarchism is taken seriously but also everyday and particular concrete struggles.

Fundamentally, this concrete struggle in a workplace is a collective experience, guided by trial, error, and reflection; it cannot be experienced through abstract propaganda or specific concessions in themselves. Instead, it is often suggested that anarchists participate in these struggles through direct action in order not to concede to their abstract slogans or reformist tendencies. Direct action is perhaps best detailed by French Syndicalist Emile Pouget in his famous and aptly titled essay "Direct Action", where he characterises it as the workers taking direct, autonomous, collective means to change their conditions of work and society in general, without mediating institutions or bureaucracies deciding their fate. The application of this direct worker-oriented strategy by leading anarchists within a workplace leads to a process whereby "a growing minority is formed and grows, its aim to acquire sufficient strength, first, to counter-balance and then to annihilate the forces of exploitation and oppression". This is expanded in a more concrete way by 20th Century German syndicalist Rudolf Rocker, who

describes direct action as “every method of immediate warfare by the workers against their economic and political oppressors”, the significance of which is “not only [to] afford them a weapon for the enforcement of better living conditions, [but it also] becomes for them a practical school, a university of experience, from which they draw instruction and enlightenment in richest measure”. The primary tool anarchists have, then, is direct and collective action, oriented towards immediate goals but also collective learning and reflection. How an anarchist should wield this tool without superseding the interests of other workers is by leading by example and influencing collective struggle in practical scenarios, to build from a minority a force capable of overcoming the limitations imposed by the capitalists, the state, and bureaucratic institutions.

To return to the practical question of engaging as an individual anarchist, as is the case in many Australian workplaces, the other side of the potential for collective action is the limited ability of individual anarchists to apply direct action with much result. Union bureaucrats will sway and influence debates (if they allow them at all), personal workplace politics can override political considerations, and a strategy of concession can win the day when workers are not won over to interests beyond the immediate demands of the workplace when the bosses pile on the pressure. An individual can easily find themselves isolated or overworked in trying to influence these collective struggles, or sacrifice their principles by attempting to seize influence without the political support of their co-workers (or merely with personal support gained on purely interpersonal grounds), rather than through debate and example. Ultimately, to win serious battles, anarchists organised into caucuses, organisations, or in coordination with other rank-and-file anarchists, will be far more effective. When the battles are serious and the opponents powerful, this effectiveness is vital.

RANK-AND-FILE STRATEGIES THAT INFLAME THE BASE ARE ULTIMATELY OUR BEST WEAPON

This article has so far tackled the general ways in which anarchists can influence unions in order to show that building organised anarchist consciousness is fundamentally the way forward. This section will more specifically look at what strategies are available for groups of anarchists to use in order to build revolutionary power through unions without conceding to the reformist tendencies of their bureaucracies.

Schmidt and van der Walt in their recent book Black Flame usefully describe three major methods that anarchists have used to shift unions towards anarchist ideas and practice: boring from within, dual unionism, and rank-and-file unionism. Rather than describing all methods in abstract, much can be learned about each strategy by applying them to the conflict between the directly oppositional Shopkeepers and Distributors Association (SDA) and the Retail and Fast Food Workers Union (RAFFWU) in Australia. The only broad point that I will make is that

dual unionism, where a radical union is established in direct opposition to a concessionary union, is an inappropriate strategy for Australia's current political context. With union density at an all time low, with huge government offences being prepared on even concessionary unions, and with the ideas of anarchism not being widely held within the community, the practical consequence of a dual union would likely be to become the intense target of the state and capitalists, with little initial power to win over fellow workers.

Perhaps the only situation where dual unionism could have been appropriate would have been to combat the SDA, whose close ties to the bosses and undemocratic format make it unsuitable for rank-and-file activity. However, with the establishment of the RAFFWU in 2016, intended as a direct left wing alternative to the SDA, splitting the terrain even further would likely give more opportunity for the SDA to split its opponents rather than providing opportunities to build organisation on the shop floor.

The establishment of RAFFWU instead presents an opportunity for a strategy of boring from within. Boring from within is a strategy wherein anarchists enter into non-radical unions in order to reform them towards radical politics. The RAFFWU is highly susceptible to such a strategy as it is small, and therefore has a limited bureaucracy that is pliable through grassroots pressure. It's also a union with much potential, as it often covers young, underpaid, and precarious workers. This bureaucratic weakness provides the opportunity for even a small caucus of organised anarchists to easily influence the broad movement of the union, encouraging direct action in other workplaces and winning over a significant section of workers to the ideas of anarchism. I will, however, preface this by saying that this strategy risks putting undue focus on influencing the union bureaucracy, rather than on strengthening the hand of rank and file workers.

However, the particular utility of the boring from within strategy in the case of RAFFWU conversely demonstrates why a rank-and-file strategy is more appropriate for the majority of unions within Australia. As I described earlier in this article, most major unions, such as the Electrical Trades Union (ETU), the United Workers Union (UWU), or the Australian Services Union (ASU), have large and self-interested bureaucracies to suppress a boring from within strategy, or draw anarchists into protracted battles over leadership positions to distract from the real work of building worker power. Conversely, the size of the union is roughly correlated to the size of the base of workers it represents, meaning that although a boring strategy would encounter more resistance, a rank and file strategy that builds campaigns and wins concrete disputes within the workplace has far more potential to build autonomy and consciousness in the workplace. A rank and file strategy focuses on developing grassroots, worker-led campaigns around issues that inflame the base and direct them towards more radical politics, bypassing the union bureaucracy when it stands in the way and using it as a tool when it follows the movement's lead. In this case, developing and supporting worker-led campaigns is the

key to influencing and wielding the power of the union, whilst still remaining a great distance from its reformist bureaucracy.

THE NECESSITY OF LONG-TERM ORGANISATION

The principles I've used to assess the utility of these strategies is worth restating: what strategies generate the maximisation of worker autonomy, self-management, and political consciousness? What makes any of these strategies viable to develop a society without wage labour and the bosses is that it allows for the workers themselves to direct their own struggles and find their own freedom. Struggle that does not move us to that goal, where workers strike against the capitalists and the state and build a new society based on human need and solidarity rather than profit, will ultimately be a dead end. We will always be better equipped to win that struggle if we are organised, practically and theoretically, within unions and outside of them, and therefore we should be constantly striving towards greater organisation.

Revolutionary opportunity can strike at any moment and workers must be organised to seize the opportunity. There is no better time to lay the groundwork for a better world, either by organising with other rank-and-file members of your union, developing radical caucuses, or by coordinating with comrades like those of the Sydney Anarcho-Communists. Worker power is key to a world where people decide their fate for themselves - let's not allow the state, the bosses, or the bureaucrats to take it from us.

ON THE AUTHORITARIAN PERSONALITY

Daniel al-Rachid

On the face of it, one of the more inexplicable elements of humans is our tendency to not only accept suffering, but to give it out to others. One can find an example in the cases of tradesmen bullying apprentices – many of the bullies were themselves bullied when they were apprentices, yet instead of concluding that apprentices should be treated with dignity, they turn around and dish it out when they get their chance. Similar examples can be found in parents who beat their children, who were themselves beat when they were young, or in the women who practice circumcision upon their daughters, granddaughters and nieces, who at the same time endure violence from their husbands.

On reflection, it makes no sense; it not only seems abhorrent, but illogical too – why would you try and justify the same torment you yourself endured? To be sure, there are more circumstantial reasons behind each specific example I mentioned, but allow me to generalise the cases a little; there may be value in stepping back and looking at things from a wider perspective.

Erich Fromm chipped away at our problem. Fromm was a German leftist and Jew who underwent his theoretical training as an associate of the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research. After fleeing Germany in the 1930s, he set up shop in both the USA and Mexico, as a lecturer and professional analyst. As a Freudian and a Marxist – albeit as idiosyncratic versions of both – Fromm pushed for a humanist approach to socialism, offering a critique of both Soviet communism and western capitalism as being deleterious to the human spirit.

Fromm believed that we are mistaken when we think of people who wish to dominate and people who wish to submit as being total opposites. In fact, they are two sides of the same coin; together, the dominant and the submissive form “the authoritarian personality”. The opposite of the dominant is not the submissive – instead, the opposite of both is the “mature personality”.

The root of both submissiveness and dominance is to be found in a lack of independence, an inability to cope with freedom. This is at the core of the authoritarian personality. Both kinds of authoritarian need to feel bonded to someone or something in order to live, but they can’t find it with either love or reason, the two things Fromm says allow us to form bonds whilst keeping our own independence.

Fromm’s definitions of love and reason are a bit technical. In short, love is not simply the connection to your romantic partner or children, but an emotional feeling of being one with the

world. The person in love preserves their own integrity as a lover. Reason is not the same thing as intelligence – Fromm understands intelligence as simply using your mental aptitude to solve a particular task, like a dog sitting down to get his owner to give him a treat. Reason, on the other hand, is much more than this; it's a way of understanding, of reckoning with what we experience and grasping something beneath its surface layers.

Instead of bonding through love or reason, the authoritarian finds a bond by fusing with others and "destroying [their] own identity". The submissive-type feels bonded in service to a master or in the mass of a large movement. They can't carry any responsibility or make decisions independently, so they seek out relationships of dependency – to Hitler, or to the communist party. On the other hand, the strength of the dominant-type comes from the way they incorporate the personalities of others into themselves. They are as dependent on the ruled as the submissive is on the ruler. In addition to this, many rulers regard themselves as submitting to a high power; Hitler, as Fromm notes, was fanatic about man submitting to nature.

Both forms of the authoritarian personality trace back to the root issue – symbiotic relationships, or relationships of mutual dependency. This is one explanation about why we can see sadism and masochism in the same person. Fromm uses the example of a man who beats his wife but then goes to work and becomes a perfect sycophant to his boss. We could also use the example of a religious monarch that rules over many, yet is the "first among servants" to God.

Assessing this as radicals, our first thought is to note the back-to-front approach. Instead of looking at flawed personalities as a result of authoritarian systems, we're almost looking at authoritarian systems as the result of flawed personalities. It's as if we were to understand capitalism by reference to the "capitalist personality", which involves using people for money, glorifying competition, and so on. Perhaps it will say something interesting about business people, but what does it mean for our main task – the destruction of authoritarianism altogether?

Fromm's viewpoint is naturally one more amenable to psychiatrists and liberals than it is to unionists and anarchists (his book Escape from Freedom begins with a quote from Thomas Jefferson about the inalienable rights of man). It's an attempt to posit an individual understanding of what is fundamentally a collective problem. This goes some way in explaining how an explicit radical like Fromm could make a comfortable living in McCarthyite America, writing mass-market consumer books about love and freedom. The prevalence of individualised models of disorder is a sign of the working class' weakness.

The flawed person is treated as a sick creature who can find treatment in therapy; the cure offered is not in greater association among fellow workers, in working class institutions, or in fighting the class war; the solution is to be found in a well-paid professional. This is not to say

that psychologists are useless – in the modern world, they are essential to our survival – but that their activities will not likely result in the development of socialism. True, a radical psychoanalyst like Fromm condemns capitalism as a source of illness; nonetheless, he operates as a walking contradiction: capitalism harms the person, yet the cure for the harm is not in the abolition of capitalism – or in the process of building the movement to destroy it.

Still, I can't help but feel that Fromm was onto something. A truly critical understanding of society does not need to be a dogmatic, mechanistic one – for example, we'd expect a proper critical understanding to be quite different from the "dialectical materialist" caricature of Marx, the one that puts forward a mechanical thesis along the lines of "all subjective thought is determined by the objective material world". After all, Marx himself wrote something very relevant about this:

> ***"Both for the production on a mass scale of communist consciousness, and for the success of the cause itself, the alteration of men on a mass scale is necessary, an alteration which can only take place in a practical movement, a revolution; this revolution is necessary, therefore, not only because the ruling class cannot be overthrown in any other way, but also because the class overthrowing it can only in a revolution succeed in ridding itself of all the muck of ages and become fitted to found society anew".***

As it stands now, the working class is deeply fractured by economic stratification, by ideology, by categories of race, gender and so on, but also substantially by personality. The constitution of the movement to get rid of capitalism – and with it all these horrendous social problems – will require a reckoning with these differences, and this is where Fromm shows his worth. When we engage with our fellow workers, we are not merely engaging with simple carriers of wider social norms, we're engaging with real people who do not merely internalise norms, but reflect on them, practically understand them and generate their own.

Why do some people – of identical class backgrounds – become socialists, but others devotees of some religion? Why do some join a union, and others scab? Why do some treat co-workers with respect, and others treat co-workers with scorn? Why are some men abusive and controlling, yet others respectful and open? The answer does not lie sitting on Fromm's chaise lounge, but that does not mean we cannot mine his work for what is useful. His work brings us closer to understanding who we are, and where we fit into the system.

When it comes to the chicken-and-egg problem of what comes first, the authoritarian personality, or the authoritarian structure, we have to admit that there is no clear answer; these two things are in constant interplay with each other. It's a knot we don't untie with simple reflection, but in the practical fight for social progress. Fromm was right to seek a resolution to the problem of the authoritarian personality in the development of the faculties of love and reason,

towards maturity and independence; he was wrong to seek it in professional therapy, or apply it only to the individual. The resolution will come in the resolution of the class war – the end of authoritarianism altogether, where we stop talking about this or that person but begin to speak of humanity altogether.

ON SOCIAL REPRODUCTION: INVISIBLE LABOUR AND THE VIOLENT ORIGINS OF THE NUCLEAR FAMILY

Anonymous

Reproductive labour has an essential role in the capitalist apparatus. It reproduces class divisions, structural racism and the subjugation of women to the needs of capital on an international scale. In this article I am going to analyse what social reproduction is first and foremost, the historical processes of how it came about including the creation of the nuclear family, and how we as anarchists can and should understand it.Reproductive work refers to the undervalued waged and unwaged labour that mostly women perform in order to uphold the reproduction of labour power, like housework, raising children, domestic and care work such as paid and unpaid childcare duties, and the reproduction of associated social processes like the nuclear familial structure. Under capitalism, this invisible labour serves to produce and maintain workers so that they are able to continue to work; by servicing social needs, whether that be material or sexual, reproductive labour is essential for the economy to function and reproduce itself, at little to no expense to capitalists. This type of work has been devalued, feminised and made invisible, and the people who perform it divided along class-based and racial lines.

HOUSEWIFIZATION AND THE CREATION OF THE NUCLEAR FAMILY

Critical to the exploitation of women's reproductive labour is the creation of a form of social organisation that rendered their labour invisible and disempowered their political action: the nuclear family. The creation of the nuclear family is an inherently violent and racialized process, inseparable from the development of capitalism and colonialism. The primacy of the nuclear family structure began in the early stages of capitalism with the creation of new markets in luxury goods and resources extracted from the third world.[1] The image of European women in the upper classes as 'consumers and demonstrators of luxury wealth'[2] facilitated by imperial expansion and exploitation reinforced a dichotomy between public and private realms that encouraged domesticity on one hand, and privatisation on the other; wealth, once a public spectacle, was now displayed in private homes behind closed doors. Whilst European women were secluded and disempowered inside the walls of palaces and mansions, men were given supremacy over the public realm which included governance, economic and political affairs. The convenient creation of women as 'luxury creatures' functioned to open up new markets for imperial powers through the creation of a global underclass, and in the process subjugated women to eternal domesticity and imprisonment in the private sphere, whilst simultaneously creating societal bonds of subservience to the rational, public male actor and breadwinner.

1 Mies, M. (1986) 'Colonization and Housewifization' in Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale: Women in the International Division of Labour, London: Zed Books Ltd: 101.
2 Mies, p. 101.

Thus the ideal of the domesticated, privatised woman was born, which would then be exported internationally.

In contrast, in pre-industrial Europe the property-less classes were originally barred from the institution of marriage; poor women were still required to work in the public realm out of necessity – it was expedient for capital to create the image of the luxury housewife to create and exploit new colonial markets, however it was still necessary to keep working class women enslaved in precarious wage labour to fuel industrial development. At the onset of industrial capitalism, working class women provided extremely cheap labour as members of the industrial proletariat, as they had an imperative to provide for their children, and were largely barred from involvement in guilds and labour organising, rendering them disorganised and lacking bargaining power. However, the extreme exploitation of women and children became a problem for capitalists, who were concerned with producing and sustaining more workers in the pursuit of profits; the excessive surplus extracted from their labour began to hinder their productivity and lower birth rates. In order to engrain the imperative of producing the next generation of workers, poor women 'had to be made to breed more workers'.[3] To European society, poor women as they were 'constituted a threat to bourgeois morality with its ideal of the domesticated woman…Therefore, it was also necessary to domesticate the proletarian woman'.[4] Hence, the nuclear family was exported to the working classes.

The bourgeoise social-sexual division of labour, which confined the woman and family to the private realm and gave men free reign in the public sphere, was reinforced in the working classes by the state, a bourgeoise institution ultimately designed to further the expansion of capital by exploiting patriarchal logics and gender hierarchies.[5] Homosexuality, abortion and sex work were criminalised by law in order to maintain existing class structures, by preventing the upward mobility of sex workers in society, but also to remove threats to production, due to the traditional inability for people in non-heterosexual relationships to produce the next generation of workers as well as the fact that abortion depletes the available labour force. Because of this, sex work has been criminalised and the individuals who perform this work vilified and discriminated against, all whilst it continues to be an essential service that forms an adjunct to the nuclear family and is relied on as a form of reproductive waged labour. In the context of the inevitable commodification of all things under capitalism, the fact that sex is relegated in hegemonic narratives to the private sphere leads to its public criminalisation as a natural conclusion. Through a myriad of legal reforms in the second half of the nineteenth century, including the criminalisation of sexual relations outside marriage and restrictions on abortion, the nuclear family structure and the male breadwinner and female homemaker roles within it

3 Mies, M. (1986) 'Colonization and Housewifization' in Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale: Women in the International Division of Labour, London: Zed Books Ltd: 105.
4 Mies, p. 105.
5 MacKinnon, C. A. (2006) 'Introduction: Women's Status, Men's States' in Are Women Human? And Other International Dialogues, Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

were cemented.[6] The working class embraced the nuclear family structure because it was symbolic of higher social standing and wealth; in this way it became an aspirational goal of social mobility, and was widely accepted by the proletariat.

MALE DOMINANCE MANIFESTED IN THE STATE AND PUBLIC-PRIVATE DICHOTOMIES

The establishment of the nuclear family essentially cemented public-private categories of labour based on gender, with the vital work of social reproduction being forced onto women in the private sphere. This societal division is part of a larger societal trend of the de-valorisation of that which is feminised. The hierarchy of the state over private life under the patriarchy literally creates a 'feminized realm within which male dominance is permitted free reign, simultaneously masculinising the state' and the public sphere.[7] It is a process which is essential to the development and reproduction of capitalism and the nation-state. Reproductive labour performed by women has become so normalised and its value so diminished that it is primarily thought of as a natural resource, freely available without cost or complaint. Thanks to this history, nation states in the 21st century are dependent on women for economic survival, which is contingent on women making sacrifices at the service of the neoliberal global economy, whether that be in the home or the workplace. In the Philippines for example, the state capitalises and depends upon ideas about 'feminized sacrifice' which the government uses to 'sustain their sovereignty'.[8] The Philippine state harnesses ingrained expectations of the domesticated, privatised female actor reinforced over centuries, to ensure the economy continues to export domestic labour abroad.[9] The neo-liberalisation of human rights discourse in regards to individual autonomy and dignity, which prioritises private rather than collective rights as essential for the continuation of the free market economy[10], has only served to reinforce this public-private dichotomy which ultimately relegates women to the reproductive realm at the service of capital and the state.

GENDERED AND RACIALIZED INTERNATIONAL LABOUR FLOWS

The situation in the Philippines demonstrates how the global division of social reproductive labour also creates a hierarchy of women according to race as well as class. Nowadays, the so called 'advancement' of wealthy white women in career and social standing promoted by white liberal feminisms leads to the purchasing of the commodity of reproductive labour from women of colour, both in the form of household work as well as sex. In the Philippines, domes-

6 Mies, p. 101.
7 MacKinnon, p. 5.
8 Tanyag, M. (2017) 'Invisible Labor, Invisible Bodies: How the Global Political Economy Affects Reproductive Freedom in the Philippines', International Feminist Journal of Politics 19(1): 39–54: 46.
9 Tanyag, p 46.
10 Whyte, J. (2019) The Morals of the Market: Human Rights and the Rise of Neoliberalism, London: Verso.

tic workers perform the reproductive labour of more privileged women in industrialised countries as they relegate their own reproductive labour to women left at home.[11] Labour export is highly gendered, with the majority of overseas workers being women working in 'unskilled and service occupations such as laborers and domestic workers'in developed economies,[12] thus allowing white western housewives to hire cheap labour performed by migrant women of colour. This ultimately creates a 'hierarchy of womanhood', where sex workers are relegated to the lowest tier, after migrant reproductive labourers and housewives.[13] The outsourcing of feminised reproductive labour from the third world means that the alleged 'freedom' of the wealthy white woman can only be achieved at the expense of the exploitation of labour performed by women of colour. It is a key feature of a global economic system that serves to subordinate women of colour who find themselves at the absolute bottom of an international power hierarchy based on white supremacy and patriarchal dominance.

THE PROBLEM WITH LIBERAL FEMINISMS

White liberal 'feminism' will have you believe that we simply need to liberate wealthy housewives from their chains of domestic subservience by allowing more women to become CEOs. However, this is a white-washed and reformist narrative, which ignores the historical processes implicated in social reproduction, such as the role of colonialism and capitalism in creating the bourgeois nuclear family structure which was then exported internationally. This familial structure and the subsequent subordination of women emerged because it was expedient to capital, and it has morphed into the gendered and class-based global division of labour we see internationally today. It functions to produce and reproduce capital and trap women in a cycle of domestic subservience in the process. Labour like sex work has been criminalised and the individuals who perform this work vilified and discriminated against, whilst it forms an adjunct to the nuclear family and is relied on as a form of reproductive waged labour. The 'weak' femininеis both prized and hated, being an archetype which is both exalted and desired by society, whilst also a tool which is necessary for the continuation of the subordination of women in the domestic realm.Within the context of transnational capitalism, reproductive labour flows also facilitate the stratification of women into different social classes, which reflects the racial inequality inherent to capitalism. Poor women of colour are forced to perform the reproductive labour of wealthy white women, which propagates class divisions based on race.The public-private distinction propagated by the bourgeois propertied classes further pushes women into a privatised, feminised realm, thus making invisible the very work that is needed for capital to continue to reign supreme.

These contradictions in societal attitudes towards reproductive labour and sex work are inher-

11 Parrenas, p. 561.

12 Tanyag, p. 46.

13 Parrenas, R. S. (2000) 'Migrant Filipina Domestic Workers and the International Division of Reproductive Labour', Gender & Society14(4): 560-581: 562.

ent to the patriarchal, capitalist and heteronormative regime we live under. If we are to step in the direction of achieving any kind of liberation from these forces, public-private distinctions in regards to labour must be disrupted, and the ideal of the nuclear family created by the bourgeoisie and then exported to the working classes as a mode of social control must be done away with. As anarchists, we know that the subordination of women and the primacy of capital as reinforced by the state are intimately linked; the only way to break the cycle of patriarchal domination is to essentially work at dismantling the capitalist economic structures that have led to the relegation of women to the private sphere. This can only be achieved by taking industrial action, alongside establishing dual power networks; in order to overthrow capitalism and the state, and liberate ordinary people from servicing the global neoliberal economy, we must take direct action against the capitalist apparatus which has caused social reproduction as a mode of oppression to exist, but we must also take reproductive labour into our own hands and manage it within our own communities in a collective and accountable way. Working class women can't fall into the trap of fighting against men as bourgeois feminists espouse, but must fight against the ruling class together with men.[14] Vice versa, it is in the interests of all genders to fight against capitalism alongside women; after all, the so-called freedom to work for a wage is based on a system which relies on the exploitation of women's reproductive labour. Challenging gendered divisions of labour and the nuclear family structure can only be achieved by establishing collective dual power; when the task of social reproduction is taken into the hands of the community and shared, rather than atomised in each individual woman's home, we begin to disrupt the systems that are the root causes of societal ills.

14 Mies, M. (1986) 'Colonization and Housewifization' in Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale: Women in the International Division of Labour, London: Zed Books Ltd: 108.

TOWARDS A RADICAL ECOLOGY: AN ANARCHIST RESPONSE TO THE CLIMATE CRISIS

T H Livingstone and James Sherriff

It is no exaggeration to say that we are at a turning point in history.

Our collective response to the global crises we are now facing will determine our success in not only the next few years, but the next few decades - perhaps even the next century. The coronavirus pandemic has, of course, become the dominant issue of 2020, but the climate crisis has not halted or even slowed its progress behind the scenes. Bushfires sweep the globe as summers come and go, and the tipping points beyond which recovery will become impossible are cascading one-by-one. Time is running out.

But this is not just a time of existential dread - it is also a time which holds the possibility of deeply transformative change. This could be an era of abundance and prosperity, if only the fruits of our collective labour were shared equitably amongst all people; if communities had the freedom and autonomy to determine their own needs and wants; if workers the world over had the power to direct their energies towards genuinely productive and rewarding work, not the wasteful and demeaning work forced on them by the 'invisible hand of the market', or the blunt arm of the state.[1] It is this gap between what is, and what could be, that is the revolutionary potential of our time. The possibility of a truly socialist and harmonious society is now within reach, if only we had the will and the courage to seize it.

This article intends to set the stage for a discussion that needs to happen if we are to truly address the climate crisis. We must, as anarcho-communists, determine how our ideas of libertarian socialist revolution fit with the material and scientific conditions pressed upon us by climate change and the natural environment, without compromising our commitment to a full and positive freedom for all people. We must define and defend these ideas firstly as Leftists, to guard against the co-optation of radical climate action by 'green capitalism' or 'market-based solutions'. But as anarchists, we must also critique solutions which rely entirely on a swollen state bureaucracy, such as the Green New Deal, as these solutions deal with only part of the problem.

This is not a discussion to be taken lightly, and we do not put forward these ideas simply for the sake of argument. This is not an academic exercise, but an earnest response to a dire, tangible, and immediate threat. We also do not pretend to hold the solutions to this crisis ourselves - we only intend to start a discussion so that locally relevant and effective solutions

1 The invisible hand describes the unintended social benefits of an individual's self-interested actions, a concept that was first introduced by Adam Smith in 1759 in The Theory of Moral Sentiments, in reference to income distribution.

may arise organically.

THE THIRD ROAD: THE ANARCHIST'S APPROACH

Faced with the two basic approaches to climate change, green capitalism and a centralised state-delivered intervention, we anarchists ought to feel caught between a rock and a hard place. One of the fundamental tenets of anarchist thought is that any state, even those that are nominally 'socialist', exists as an inherently violent entity that alienates the individuals whom it is created to govern. The natural function of a state is to centralise and bureaucratise power within societies, which limits the autonomy of communities and individuals and stifles the localised innovation needed to respond to crises as they arise.

So we don't oppose state-led solutions just for the sake of it. The key flaw is that the state is utterly inept at solving the specific problems of each particular community in its jurisdiction, and so is inherently unable to respond to the localised dynamics of the climate crisis. This flaw is due primarily to the issues of centralisation and authoritarianism inherent to the institution of the state under both capitalist and socialist economies. Centralisation can be defined briefly, in the context of state governance, as the concentration of decision-making power and authority into a single institutional body, which then delegates this power down to other institutions. Its supposed merit is its ability to ensure uniformity of policy and action, and to enforce the agreed upon rules and conditions of the society or territory in which it governs.

In the example of climate action, this would mean the ability to enforce a uniform transition to renewable energy sources across whole nations. However, the reality of centralisation is that it removes the autonomy of communities and individuals and separates them from the political processes which govern their lives. Instead of communities and the individuals within them deciding on how they ought to manage their surrounding environments according to localised natural and human needs, a central body (e.g. the NSW Department of Planning, Industry, and Environment) of technocratic officials is responsible. This presupposes that the community "doesn't know any better" than the bureaucrats and creates unnecessary hierarchies of power that lead to wasteful and often harmful outcomes. In dealing with a crisis as complex and variable as climate change, the solutions that we implement need to be as flexible and as responsive as the problem itself. As such, relying on a centralised bureaucracy to solve ecological crises is both ineffective and undesirable.

In fact, when communities are fully empowered to make democratic decisions on issues which directly affect them, these communities are often far more sensible managers of the local environment, natural resources, and waste than centralised state departments. In her Nobel prize-winning book, Governing the Commons, Elinor Ostrom uses behavioural economics to prove this point, citing, among others, the example of a group of Turkish fishermen

successfully instituting a sustainable fishing model developed and managed by themselves. This by no means denies the importance of scientific expertise or advice. Of course, for the community to adequately manage their local environment, knowledge is vital. What we advocate and what Ostrom shows, however, is that local people are best able to put this knowledge into practice. Similar to the argument that workers are best equipped to govern the conditions and management of their own workplace, local communities are best equipped to manage the environments on which they rely. Consider the fact that First Nations peoples around the world practised effective management of their local ecosystems without any external 'experts' or governing bodies for millenia - a fact which is widely recognised but not truly respected. Indeed, if we are committed to decolonisation as well as anti-capitalism, the ideas of decentralised governance and anti-hierarchical democracy are critical to our revolutionary movement.

ECOLOGY AS RADICAL SCIENCE

This critique of state-centralisation and bureaucratic power is a fundamental anarchist notion. However, the application of this critique to the issue of environmental degradation and climate change is built on the logic of social ecology, as pioneered by Murray Bookchin.

We propose that Bookchin's framework provides a strong basis from which we can build a modern understanding of revolutionary ecosocialism. Essentially, this framework understands society, the economy, and the environment not as separate issues, but as intertwined elements of a broader ecology that is dynamic and interdependent. The most effective management of any one of these spheres requires an understanding of the complexity and needs of the others, just as in the management of a natural ecosystem. This logic is inherently critical of the state - Bookchin writes that even states which are 'radical', 'worker controlled', and 'democratic' naturally function to entrench the interests of the bureaucratic elite who have been afforded the authority of said state. The only truly democratic forms of social and economic organisation are those whose power comes from the bottom up - the kinds of organisation which recognise the autonomy of the individual and their community, and that facilitate higher-order coordination where necessary, but remove the need for permanent institutions of top-down governance.

Bookchin notes that this way of thinking is what animates modern and historical anarchist revolutionary movements worldwide. In these movements, "control over the larger organisation lies always with the affinity groups rather than with the coordinating bodies, [and] all action, in turn, is based on voluntarism and self-discipline, not on coercion and command." This form of organisation, collective action, and decision-making relies on the ecological notion of spontaneity - the spontaneity of individuals, of affinity groups, of organisations, and of communities - which is only possible in a movement based on freedom and decentralisation.

Spontaneity, in this sense, refers not simply to chaotic or erratic actions, but to the deeper belief in 'spontaneous development'. That is, the belief that projects, plans, and other developments should be free to find their own equilibrium, achieved through the creativity of free, independent individuals and collectives, and mediated through the material and cultural conditions of their context. In this framework, spontaneity not only fosters the efficient and organic development of projects and movements, it also promotes the internal liberation of the revolutionary individual, who is empowered to take up direct action where they can, and to embrace the spontaneous development of the self within the context of the collective. Imagine the difference in outcome between a 'mass' which is directed from above, and a collective which has embraced and encouraged the creativity of each independent individual in its movement.

As the climate crisis is an ecological crisis, this means that we must embrace these concepts of anti-hierarchical decentralisation and developmental spontaneity. Recognising that our climate crisis is multi-faceted is essential. Global warming means more erratic climates which leads to increased food scarcity, raised sea levels, increased population density, and more extreme weather events that threaten global supply lines. For Pacific Island communities, climate change looks like smaller land mass and greater exposure to storms. In Australia, regional communities suffer more frequent and intense fires, floods, and droughts, while asthmatics the country over suffer from bushfire smoke. For all, it will require a greater flexibility and responsiveness to local environmental dynamics, which is impossible under a globalised capitalist economy and under an economy guided by a bloated state bureaucracy.

Ecology describes a total and holistic harmony with the natural world which allows humans to flourish in their natural environments without exploiting or mismanaging them. It is not merely about saving one particular species from extinction or this particular forest from logging. An ecological response to the climate crisis would recognise that some regions may be more suited to hydroelectricity, while others may best be served by large solar arrays. Just considering the sheer complexity and diversity of natural environments and human societies across the world, it should be clear that ecology is a truly anarchist science.

CONCLUSION

The question of our time, then, is not how we should respond to the climate crisis, or the coronavirus crisis, or the current economic crisis. The real question is twofold: firstly, how can we take hold of the revolutionary potential of this moment to attack the root cause of each of these crises - capitalism, and all its oppressive and destructive effects; and secondly, how can we build in its place a system that will truly value and secure the freedom of every individual, community, and society around the world.

In dealing with the first question - the destruction of the old - we must recognise that the revolutionary dynamic of our time is one of intense potentiality. The gap between what we currently have, and the possibility of what we could have in terms of resource abundance, technological development, and individual freedom has widened to the point of breaking, and the possibility of a post-scarcity society is now irresistible. Anyone can see that our modern technology should be freeing us, not facilitating our further exploitation; anyone can tell that there is food enough to go around, if only we had the freedom and the means to share it. We must recognise that the potential for change is no longer a dream but a necessity, and that if we do not seize on the energy and the hope that lies within this revolutionary potentiality, we will fail and this system will collapse upon us.

On the second question - of building something new - we must always be working to interpret and explain the dynamics of the current era through the lens of the world we are seeking to create. As anarchists, our responses to the immediate issues facing us must be guided not just by the need to deal with the issues themselves, but by the greater goal of fundamental societal change, a goal grounded in the desire for human freedom, social justice, and material prosperity for all.

IMAGINING A DEMOCRATIC PRESS: HOW ANARCHISM CAN RELEASE JOURNALISM FROM THE CAPITALIST CHOKEHOLD

Honey Christensen and Robbie Mason

The mass media propagates an illusory sense of freedom. The belief that the media is an integral cog in democracy, holding governments and multinational corporations accountable, unequivocally benign, has a soporific effect. It makes the populace susceptible to the inculcation of values that encourage social regimentation and adherence to institutions useful to capitalism. The current media landscape is underpinned by the deification of the market and demonisation of all journalistic mechanisms that operate or attempt to operate on the fringes of the capitalist organism, a view endorsed by a populace under the influence of systematic propaganda.

Much of the media we consume has been depoliticised and sensationalised. Clickbait listicles from Buzzfeed and our cultural obsession with the vicissitudes of celebrity life are particularly frightening examples of the phenomenon. Advertisers and ever-expanding media conglomerates, clasped tightly within the fists of a few wealthy families, have hijacked public discourse, prioritising profit to the detriment of ethical journalism. Even critical, research-based journalism feeds the capitalist organism because it ultimately serves the interests of the state and those in control of capital, from whom it acquires much of its 'legitimately' sourced material. This is part of a 'propaganda model', so called by Noam Chomsky and Edward S. Herman in ***Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media***, a work that remains especially relevant as we analyse journalism and media through an anarchist lens.

Like a landslide eroding the prospect of a level playing field and creating roadblocks in the dissemination of radical media narratives , the professionalisation of journalism via tertiary education courses and accreditation agencies reinforces capitalist relations of production. Journalism and creative writing degrees are likely to remain expensive if neoliberal models for higher education, centred on the employability of students and profitability, persist worldwide. This locks out the masses from becoming qualified journalists, preserving an elite media class.

Formal training teaches subservience to bureaucratic authority. No corporate university wants to develop a reputation for producing cowboy journalists who ignore rules and frolic in a Wild West of unabashed biased reporting and gonzo journalism, fat on a diet of Hunter S. Thompson, Antonio Gramsci, Noam Chomsky and Jacques Derrida. As a result of this conditioning, we arrogantly assume that only properly trained journalists – a technocratic elite – know best how to distil news from misinformation. The irony, of course, is that in fast-paced newsrooms, journalists rely heavily on 'credible', official sources. They attend court hearings and police departments. They skim-read press releases and draft legislation. They return to well-trusted,

proven leaks. This minimises the cost of investigating and fact-checking, and allows fewer journalists to monopolise news production. Their reporting and angles in longer analysis pieces usually therefore replicate ruling class narratives.

Formalised education entrenches problematic journalistic ethics and hierarchical relationships between writer, presenter, producer or interviewer, on the one hand, and subject or interviewee, on the other. This means upholding the violence of invasive, ethnographic scrutiny for marginalised communities. In her seminal work ***Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples***, Māori anthropologist Linda Tuhiwai Smith criticises this phenomenon, evident within academic research, as a pointed instrument for imperialist domination, all too commonly trapped within Eurocentric worldviews. We can apply the same critique to journalism.

When we view journalism as an exploitative enterprise which harnesses personal stories for the purpose of individual career advancement and profitability, it becomes clear that the press itself actively contributes to public mistrust. It is possible to look beyond the five 'filters' Chomsky and Herman identify in ***Manufacturing Consent*** to see on the horizon an ominous storm of interpersonal pressures from co-workers – pressures which limit journalists' autonomy and freedom of expression. At an interpersonal level, communication reflects the structural conditions which shape media reporting. Journalists generally consider interviews and research a zero-sum game. Showing an interviewee any sections of writing or, even more blasphemously, an entire draft prior to publication is a taboo topic in university classrooms and newsrooms. Journalists fear that an interviewee may plagiarise work or take a story to another media outlet in a hyper-competitive market if a draft is not to their taste. Pre-publication review is something whispered about in office corridors, dropped glibly into beer-fuelled pub conversations and conducted discreetly by a small minority of journalists. Revealing drafts to sources is apparently 'unprofessional'. It ruins the reputation of a newspaper for objectivity and 'transparency' because it cedes editorial authority to an outsider. It results in a reprimand[1] and sometimes even the termination of employment.

Early career journalists are instructed to manipulate sources and trigger emotional reactions to produce the best headlines. While this makes sense in the context of political reporting and forcing accountability, it is a blanket technique applied to all styles of journalism. The mainstream media, kow-towing to the interests of advertising companies and free markets, as outlined in Chomsky and Herman's propaganda model, adore sensationalism. This increases circulation and profit.

A veil of distrust entombs the press, and it goes both ways. It is not just the observers who question the observed. In a world of 'fake news' and social media echo-chambers, faith in the

1 https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/erik-wemple/post/post-reporter-criticized-for----checking-his-facts/2012/07/25/gJQA9Yot8W_blog.html

media appears to be at an all-time low. An Ipsos study[2], conducted between January 25 and February 8, 2019, found that, while Australians tend to trust media outlets more than other nationalities, our trust in traditional and digital media has steadily declined over the past five years. Our faith in traditional forms of media - that is, newspaper and magazines - declined marginally more (14%) than our faith in TV and radio (13%) and online news platforms (9%). This trend is reflected in other global surveys including the Edelman Trust Barometer - a comprehensive measure of trust in business, government, media and NGOs, updated annually for the past twenty years. The 2020 Edelman Trust Barometer Report[3] revealed that Australia is currently experiencing the largest gap in trust in social institutions between the informed public and mass population on record. Ask your average worker what they think of journalists and they'll probably tell you that journalists are a bourgeois class out to get you. Indeed, the Edelman Trust Barometer has consistently demonstrated that mistrust is particularly prevalent among non-elite residents in liberal democracies.

WHAT, THEN, CAN AN ANARCHIST PRESS LOOK LIKE?

Perhaps the history of anarchist publication in Spain can provide a model. At its zenith - James Yeoman suggests this was between 1890 and 1915 in ***Print Culture and the Formation of the Anarchist Movement in Spain***, 1890-1915 - anarchist media in Spain cultivated and disseminated information that both reported on and was integral to organising nation-wide militancy. Cognizant of their inability to match the production capacity of mainstream news sources, the presses provided readers with meaningful anarchist analysis that was intended to supplement narratives propagated by the state rather than directly compete with them. Working with limited means, the presses published information on current political struggles and associated solidarity movements, as well as philosophical pieces on anarchist theory, drawing particularly from the work of Errico Malatesta and Pyotr Kropotkin.

Publishing groups faced consistent and severe state repression including police violence and intimidation of associates such as commercial printers, as well as surveillance of postal correspondence. As such, they did not have the luxuries of open communication and legitimacy afforded to state-endorsed media entities, instead relying on community support for researching, financing and distributing their publications. Constitutive to this system were the local correspondents; the nodes that fostered reciprocal relationships between the anarchist publishers and their communities. Unlike the modern 'professional' journalist, correspondents both created and disseminated the news, writing, collecting money for their publications and solidarity funds and distributing them physically and verbally. Factory workers and other manual labourers took turns reading anarchist prose aloud on the production line while others covered their share of the labour. This ensured that revolutionary ideas circulated outside

2 https://www.ipsos.com/en-au/australians-trust-media-less-ipsos-trust-media-study
3 https://www.edelman.com.au/research/edelman-trust-barometer-2020

urban centres and traditional organising spaces, among the working populations who stood to benefit the most from them.

Anarchist writers in turn-of-the-century Spain aimed to reach workers without a formal education. They engaged readers with accessible language, directly responding to the state erosion of the public sphere by democratising anarchist ideas. Illustrations and poetry were also popular because they distilled the zeitgeist in an emotionally captivating way. Their writing was designed to be read aloud. Repetition, rhetorical devices and call-and-response techniques functioned like driftwood bobbing in a sea of proletarian discontent. Latched onto by largely illiterate working class communities, hungry for class consciousness, bedraggled and yearning for more stable ground, this oral culture tied into the dynamism and creativity of praxis-centric, libertarian socialism.

In our internet-obsessed age it is easy to forget the power of the spoken word in social movements. Conversation forces us to directly confront differing opinions and experiences, and collaboration ensures that the ideas of individuals are not poured into a black hole and divorced from a practical context. The Spanish anarchists systematically encouraged discussion of this nature in their ***tribuna libres*** (open forums), open letters section and ***certámenes*** (literary competitions), where anarchists transparently examined and evaluated the work of their peers. For this reason they regarded propaganda as praxis; it not only expanded the reach of anarchism but also consolidated the values of the groups internally. According to Yeoman, the presses were the closest thing to an anarchist structure in what was a "symbiotic relationship between movement and press."

But it is not only from the past we can learn. We can take inspiration from the current Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement in the US, where livestreamers on Facebook, Instagram, Youtube and Twitch have developed cult followings. These vigilante journalists broadcast frontline visions of BLM rallies, police skirmishes, tear gas and fire, while professional news crews duck and weave, tentatively scouring the edges of urban battlegrounds. Dedicated fans have helped crowd-source funds, carting these livestreamers around the country to cover protests and enabling them to purchase better equipment. Established in 2015, Unicorn Riot is perhaps the most famous example. But what we have seen in the past few months specifically is the proliferation of citizen journalism and full-time protesting. This is grassroots, decentralised journalism, blasted live across cyberspace with no filter.

Deprofessionalising journalism is essential to anarchist praxis. The inherent power imbalance in the observer-observed dichotomy is fundamentally incompatible with anti-hierarchical principles, especially where the observed are victims of colonialism, or members of other marginalised groups whose experiences academics and state-appointed 'welfare' agents have historically pathologised and problematised. Too many regard the journalist 'class' as mediators between the 'experts' and the unwashed, uneducated masses, a dislocating role that isolates journalists from the working classes. The resulting tension allows those experts and other institutional hegemonies to gatekeep information and decision-making power whilst expropriat-

ing knowledge from the observed. This dystopian information filter determines everything from what is classified as a mental disorder to which elections are delegitimised in the global south.

While there is nothing inherently antithetical about expertise within an anarchist framework, this exploitative dynamic must be broken down. We need a radical reconstruction of journalistic norms. This new press will free itself from the chains of objectivity, value extensive fact-checking, abolish career journalism and build trust with vulnerable communities by writing collaboratively and sharing drafts with sources hesitant to speak publicly. Anarchist journalism will act as a mouthpiece for the revolution, encourage participation and dismantle networks of social capital, drawing inspiration from our Spanish predecessors. It will not trip over itself in a bog of over-intellectualised jargon, stumbling into a barren no-man's-land of inaccessible language. With First Nations communities, where there is a long history of cultural abuse and exploiting sacred knowledge, forcibly obtained, there must be a prolonged consultation process and recognition of cultural sovereignty. A decentralised production process is the way forward.

READING FARJ'S SOCIAL ANARCHISM AND ORGANISATION: A SHORT REVIEW ON ESPECIFISMO

Charlotte Murphy

Social Anarchism and Organisation by the Anarchist Federation of Rio de Janeiro (FARJ) is a practical elaboration of the popular anarchist tendency of especifismo in South America. Especifismo takes its ideological roots from traditional anarchists and communists such as the 19th Century Russian anarchist Mikhail Bakunin and the 19th and 20th Century Italian anarchist Errico Malatesta, who theorised the foundations of anarcho-communism alongside debates about organised anarchist involvement in the labour movement. Organisationally especifismo is inspired by Platformism, a controversial program written by Ukranian anarchists articulating the need for a specific anarchist organisation after the military defeat of the anarchists by the bolsheviks in Ukraine in 1921, adapting it for a 21st century context within South America. Especifismo, inspired by the history of anarcho-communists and platformists, calls for the creation of a specific anarchist organisation dedicated to a social revolution against the capitalist system and replacing it with a system of libertarian socialism. What ***Social Anarchism and Organisation*** details is discussions concerning the historical context of the tendency's emergence, its definition of the exploited classes who may be the agents of revolution, the methods by which anarchists can influence social movements, and how a proposed specific anarchist organisation should function.

Especifismo in South America emerged as a political and organisational response to the loss of what FARJ describe as 'the social vector of anarchism', namely, the social movements or popular organisations through which anarchist ideals spread and eventually become popular or hegemonic within. In the early twentieth century, revolutionary syndicalism, similar to that which had begun springing up in Europe, became a force in South America as well, where the anarchist ideals of federalism, labour neutrality, decentralisation, anti-militarism, anti-nationalism and the general strike were adopted at the First Brazilian Labour Congress. Alongside this, other cultural organisations sprang up such as schools, social centres and theatres that held the same principles of class struggle with the unions. However, from about 1920 onwards, there was intense union and anarchist suppression European factories had reopened for export, damaging the need for industrial factories in South America, and the Communist Party in Brazil turned away from the unions and allied itself with reformists. Likewise, currents within anarchism itself began to turn away from a revolutionary perspective, where syndicalism was no longer seen as a means to an end but became an end in itself, losing sight of its revolutionary purpose.

Especifismo seeks a return to this social vector of anarchism in a 21st century context to provide the means for a social revolution. It adheres to the 'classical', class-oriented form of

anarchism against some modern currents of anarchism we might call lifestyle anarchism, or small-a anarchism. Occupy Wall Street is a good example of how, like syndicalism without a revolutionary perspective, a means is turned into an end which loses any agitational quality. Occupy's obsession with consensus, horizontalism without structure and lack of political project is what drained its energy and led to its defeat. It is against these kinds of anarchist currents that especifismo defines itself, however we will see that in contemporary settings the social vector of anarchism is to be located elsewhere as opposed to in syndicalism in the start of the twentieth century.

Given especifismo strives for revolution against capital by the exploited classes by recovering the social vector of anarchism, this develops an immediate question: who are the exploited classes? FARJ defines the exploited classes by their relationship between what they call the centre and the periphery. FARJ's definition of periphery classes is broad. It includes peoples completely removed from the economic activity like remote Indigenous groups, those threatened by the centre such as peasants and small farmers, those fallen out of the centre such as precarious workers and the unemployed, those in the centre but alienated in a social, cultural or political sense which here FARJ locates the working class as well as minorities like women, LGBT people, etc. FARJ also defines centre periphery relations as reaching across imperial and imperialised states, such that capital intensive national economies like the US are the centre to labour intensive national economies in the global South. The goal of defining exploitation by a centre/periphery relationship is to pit anarchism against not only the current domination and oppression of the centre on the periphery under contemporary capitalism, but to contest alternative arrangements that reorganises society around a new centre, notably Leninism which would promote the party to the centre to manipulate the periphery.

The centre/periphery dynamic is by far the theoretically weakest claim by the FARJ. Perhaps something was lost in translation, but their definitions are far too broad and diffuse to apply consistently to complex political questions. FARJ takes the anarchist position that there are many groups of people who may spark revolution, as opposed to the orthodox Marxist point of view that it will be the industrial working class, which should be supported as a way to harness the power of popular movements where they arise. However, it's unclear what utility there is in the claim that the working class is in 'the centre', as opposed to seeing the economic centre as the landlords and the owners of the means of production, with the workers and oppressed united against them. Nor does it clarify how anarchists should approach the question of national liberation of imperialised states. Should national liberation struggles be supported because they are in the 'periphery', even if these movements are led by the national bourgeoisie? Perhaps there are fair responses to these questions that have or can be addressed through the FARJ's or other especifista organisations' theoretical analysis, so this criticism should be understood as developing space for elaboration rather than a denial of the theoretical frame entirely. From these categories, FARJ claims that a number of these groups

will provide the fertile ground for revolutionary agitation - and as well make the claim that they are more important then the industrial working class. FARJ work within agro-ecological, student and union spaces as the popular movements they engage in social insertion with. Despite some opaqueness, what we must take from these definitions is then the interaction of anarchists within these groups and their struggles, and define the anarchist principle of social insertion.

Social insertion is a strategy employed by an anarchist organisation in places where it identifies fertile struggle against capitalism to support the struggle and win over the masses to the ideas of anarchism. The principle of social insertion, in its most basic form, is to propagate direct action and direct democracy. It opposed the concept of a vanguard in that it propagates structures that directly put power into the hands of the workers or exploited peoples. They allow them their own autonomy, not posing as a vanguard that possesses theory or knowledge that 'speaks for the people'. Via direct action, the worker is not demanding to reform an institution to which they are subordinate, they are making demands on their own terms; as Malatesta put it, to seize reforms the way an army seizes territory. Via direct democracy, their voice is always guaranteed in the organisation they belong to, such as a union. Through this praxis, rather than being 'taught' by an intellectual vanguard, the contradictions of capital and labour would become clear through struggle and workers arrive at a revolutionary perspective through argument, example, and experience. For social insertion to achieve serious blows against capitalism, it must either encourage a movement to be agitational, or insert themselves into a movement that is already agitational in nature. Without agitation towards the state and capital, processes of direct democracy would be instead purely prefigurative, having no goal to end capitalism. We see the failure of 'prefiguration' without agitation in such organisations like co-ops. As these groups operate in a capitalist system, eventually they always must concede to the demands of the market and engage in exploitation.

The specific anarchist organisation is key to social insertion within popular movements. It also serves to support struggle through the auxiliary and complementary functions such as the production and reproduction of theory, collective strategic intervention into struggles, and the production of propaganda. What the specific anarchist organisation demands is ideological and theoretical unity, and there is good reason to believe this is necessary. Anarchists do not require, on the social level, for movements they socially insert themselves into to have all members be anarchists or hold a complete set of anarchist principles. Their agitation towards a revolution that brings about libertarian socialism is what matters. But within a specific anarchist organisation, which is on the political level, this theoretical unity is key. This is the same way we look at the need for collective organising against capital. If labour out-organises capital, it wins. The same should apply to arriving at political lines and theoretical positions within anarchism. If the organisation has differing theories coexisting within it, it will fall into disorganisation and loss. This theoretical unity must be informed by the local context of pop-

ular movements anarchists engage in, and the struggles of exploited classes. The theoretical line therefore, in Australia, would look different to that of South America. This is what holds the political organisation grounded to its real context, whilst giving it the strength to win its goals in agitating towards revolution.

Despite some elements of the political analysis of especifismo needing clarification in FARJ's ***Social Anarchism and Organisation***, the text is an incredible manual on how to revive a classical, communist, class struggle anarchism that enjoyed great popularity in the early twentieth century, whilst revising its political and organisational errors. By calling for revolution, and clearly outlining what a world might look like after it, especifismo brings something to the political landscape which has mostly been lost: an actual vision of the future. Our political imagination in society, for the most part, is a dead one. Liberal incrementalism sees no real way to improve people's lives, it just defines itself out of fear of a creeping right (that it allows to creep further). Neoconservatives and fascists see threats and scapegoats everywhere, create them from thin air, and propose nothing positive but a psychotic destruction of an imaginary enemy. And small-a anarchism, individualism or lifestyle anarchism sees not much for society, no agitation, and not much outside of one's self. A better world must be imagined, and importantly, especifismo is one the few tenets that actually does.

FURTHER READINGS

WHAT CAN ANARCHISTS DO TO ORGANISE WITHIN UNIONS IN AUSTRALIA?

"Part 2: Strategy and Tactics" in Black Flame: The Revolutionary Class Politics of Anarchism and Syndicalism, Lucien van der Walt and Michael Schmit (2009). **Warning: Michael Schmit, the co-author of this book, has later expressed nationalist-supremicist style views in an attempt to synthasise a form of "nationalist anarchism". Although there is no evidence that these positions influence the arguments within this book, it's important to approach the text critically.** Link: https://libcom.org/library/black-flame-volume-1-lucien-van-der-walt-michael-schmidt

"Chapter 4: The Objectives of Anarchosyndicalism" and "Chapter 5: The Methods of Anarcho-syndicalism" in Anarcho-syndicalism: Theory and Practice, Rudolf Rocker (1938).
Link: https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/rudolf-rocker-anarchosyndicalism

"Interests and Ideals" in The Method of Freedom, Errico Malatesta (1922). The entire book is worth reading, but for some choice articles, see: "Anarchy", "The General Strike and the Revolution", "Organization" "In Relation to Strikes", "The Workers' New International", "The Two Routes: Reform or Revolution? Freedom or Dictatorship?", and "Gradualism". Link: https://libcom.org/library/method-freedoman-errico-malatesta-reader-errico-malatesta

"Direct Action", Emile Pougetv (1910). Link: https://www.katesharpleylibrary.net/vhhngg

ON THE AUTHORITARIAN PERSONALITY

https://www.marxists.org/archive/fromm/works/1957/authoritarian.htm which would later be expanded into the full book, https://libcom.org/library/escape-freedom

ON SOCIAL REPRODUCTION: INVISIBLE LABOUR AND THE VIOLENT ORIGINS OF THE NUCLEAR FAMILY

Mies, M. (1986) 'Colonization and Housewifization' in Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale: Women in the International Division of Labour, London: Zed Books

TOWARDS A RADICAL ECOLOGY: AN ANARCHIST RESPONSE TO THE CLIMATE CRISIS

Murray Bookchin, Post-Scarcity Anarchism, 1971, in particular, "Ecology and Revolutionary Thought"

Elinor Ostrom, Governing the Commons, 1990.

IMAGINING A DEMOCRATIC PRESS: HOW ANARCHISM CAN RELEASE JOURNALISM FROM THE CAPITALIST CHOKEHOLD

James Yeoman, Print Culture and the Formation of the Anarchist Movement in Spain, 1890-1915 (Routledge: New York, 2020).

Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples (London: Zed Books, 2012).
Noam Chomsky and Edward S. Herman, Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media (Pantheon Books: New York, 1988).
Alicia C. Shepard, 'Show and Print', American Journalism Review 18, no. 2 (March 1996).

READING FARJ'S SOCIAL ANARCHISM AND ORGANISATION: A SHORT REVIEW ON ESPECIFISMO

Federação Anarquistado Rio de Janeiro - FARJ: Social Anarchism and Organisation (2008)
Link: https://libcom.org/files/social_anarchism_and_organisation_farj_en.pdf

CONTRIBUTIONS

Feedback and general engagement from readers is important to any serious radical journal. As such, we encourage anyone with thoughts or questions to submit letters to us to be printed in future bulletins. Contributions should be no greater than 300 words, and should be related to content in the bulletin or to Australian politics generally.

Those wishing to contribute art to the bulletin are also strongly encouraged to e-mail us.

Though we prioritise generating articles through our reading group, if you would like to contribute a longer article of your own, please e-mail us with your proposal and it can be discussed.

sydneyancoms@gmail.com

Artwork by Stella MB

This bulletin was written, designed, and produced by the Sydney Anarcho-Communists from our weekly reading group. We are a libertarian socialist group formed along a shared affinity for the tendencies of anarchism: the organised struggle for a society coordinated on the basis of solidarity and without the interference of the state or capitalist bosses, and communism: that this society will be organised around each according to their ability and human need rather than profit and exploitation. This world will only be possible when working people take the reins of society from the state and the capitalists and run it for themselves.

Everyone interested in the ideas of anarcho-communism is warmly welcomed to attend our weekly reading group from 6pm-8pm at Monster Mouse Studios, 9 Gerald St Marrickville.
For updates on the reading groups, its readings and topics and general information, request to join our Melbourne/Sydney Facebook Group “Ancom Reading Group”: https://www.facebook.com/groups/838449613333624 and our Facebook Page “Sydney Anarcho-Communists“: https://www.facebook.com/Sydney-Anarcho-Communists-106535081162644

May we always carry a new world in our hearts!

Facebook Page

Facebook Group